

2010/2011

# Physician & Healthcare

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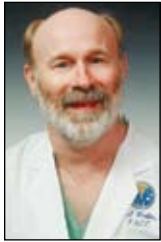


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 Stritch School of Medicine, Maywood, IL

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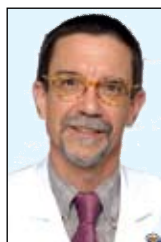
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BOARD CERTIFICATION: Internal

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509 Olde Waterford Way

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# Hand Sanitizer Facts

Many people turn to hand sanitizers to keep hands clean when there is no available soap and water. Hand sanitizer pumps are commonly found in shopping malls, at zoos, at children's play areas, and in portable restroom facilities. But how does a hand sanitizer work?

Hand sanitizers work by removing the outer layer of oil on the skin with a high concentration of alcohol.

The higher the amount of alcohol in the product, the better it will work for removing germs. According to eHow.com, the alcohol penetrates the cell membrane of the bacteria and denatures it (meaning it changes the nature of the bacteria, making it inert) by not allowing the proteins to fold properly. It simultaneously strips the outer layer of oil off of your hands, creating an inhospitable environment for new bacteria.

Choose a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 to



95 percent of alcohol to get the job done. Otherwise, the hand sanitizing lotions simply may spread around bacteria on the hands and compound the problem. Use a large dollop and rub into the hands for at least 30 seconds.

While hand sanitizers are effective at ridding the hands of certain bacteria and viruses, they are not effective against all strains. Also, they cannot clean the hands completely if blood or fecal matter is touched.

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